

REMARKS

Pending claims 1-3, 6-19, and 21-23 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,722,797 to Horton, III (Horton) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,217,848 to Meyer-Haake (Meyer-Haake). Additionally, claims 4-5 and 20 were rejected as obvious over the combination of Horton, Meyer-Haake, and U.S. Patent No. 3,986,471 to Haselton (Haselton). Applicants' representative discussed these matters in a telephonic interview conducted on April 2, 2008 and a personal interview conducted on June 6, 2008, each of which are summarized below.

Interview Summary

Examiner called Applicants' representative on April 2, 2008 to discuss this case and sincerely appreciates her taking the time to discuss the case over the phone. During the interview, Applicants' representative argued that Horton and Meyer-Haake were not combinable because Meyer-Haake failed to disclose any method of assembling an offshore structure with a heave plate. The Examiner did not agree.

Applicants' representative met in person with the Examiner on June 6, 2008 to discuss this case and sincerely appreciates her taking the time to personally meet with Applicants' representative. Applicants' representative brought a color poster showing construction of prior art systems. Applicants' representative noted that the primary reference, Horton, contained a description of a fabrication method consistent with the pictures on the poster and argued that the secondary reference, Meyer-Haake, failed to teach or suggest any heave plate fabrication method. Examiner agreed that Meyer-Haake does not teach a heave-plate fabrication method.

The Obviousness Rejection of Claims 1-3, 6-19, and 21-23

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3, 6-19, and 21-23 as obvious over Horton in view of Meyer-Haake. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. The combination of Horton and Meyer-Haake fails to teach or suggest each element of pending claim 1. In the office action, the Examiner states that Horton fails to teach or

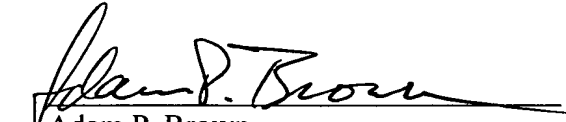
suggest the step of vertically positioning the floating structure with the heave plate along a common vertical axis. As discussed in the interview, Meyer-Haake also fails to teach such a step. As such, the combination of references fails to teach each step of the claimed method and claim 1 is believed to be allowable for at least this reason. All remaining claims include the allowable limitations of claim 1, so allowance of all pending claims is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In light of the interview and remarks set forth above, Applicants respectfully request allowance of all pending claims. An extension of time fee is submitted concurrently herewith on a separate sheet. While no other fees are believed to be due, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge the Deposit Account No. 05-1328 for any other fees associated with extensions of time for this application. Further, Applicants thank the Examiner for conducting a telephonic interview and a personal interview and invite the Examiner to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below to further discuss the application if so desired.

Respectfully submitted,

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Adam P. Brown
Reg. No. 52,657

c/oExxonMobil Upstream Research Company
P.O. Box 2189
CORP-URC-SW348
Houston, Texas 77252-2189
713-431-7649 - Phone
713-431-4664 - Facsimile